in keeping with the nature of our polity and the established conventions, all concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government of India are expected to keep the Prime Minister informed of all major policy decisions in advance notwithstanding the authority vested in the Minister-in-Charge of the concerned Ministry/Department.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The desirability of keeping the Prime Minister informed about major policy decisions is reiterated to all Ministries/Departments from time to time.

Fire in collieries

†1020. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several collieries in the country are out of production due to constant fire raging in these collieries;

(b) if so, the locations of these collieries;

(c) the quantum of coal reserves expected to be found in these collieries; and

(d) the average quantity of coal destroyed annually due to fire in the collieries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) As reported by Coal India Ltd., production in the following three collieries of subsidiary companies of Coal India Ltd. has been stopped due to fire:

(i) West Victoria Colliery under Chanch Victoria area of Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL) located near Barakar in Bardhawan District of West Bengal.

(ii) Religara Colliery under Argada area of Central Coalfields Ltd. (CCL) located near Ramgarh in Hazaribagh District of Jharkhand.

(iii) J K unit, Madhujore Colliery of Kajora area, Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) The quantum of coal reserves expected to be found in these collieries are as below:

Name of Colliery	(in Million Tonnes)
West Victoria Colliery (BCCL)	8.76
Religara Colliery (CCL)	1.02
Madhujore Colliery (ECL)	7.27

It is difficult to estimate the quantity of coal getting destroyed due to mine fire in in-situ condition as there are no laid down norms for calculating the same. However, as per some assessment made by Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited in 1980, reserves of coal lost due to fire was estimated at around 37 million tonnes in Jharia Coalfields.

Commercial exploitation of coal by private parties

1021. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allow commercial exploitation of coal mines by private parties;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to permit FDI in commercial exploitation of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) The Government has introduced a Bill namely the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 in the Rajya Sabha on 24.4.2000 aiming to allow Indian companies both in public and private sectors to mine coal in the country without the existing restriction of captive mining and to be engaged in exploration of coal in the country. The Bill is still pending with the Parliament.

(c) The Government has reviewed the policy on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and decided to increase FDI caps to 100% and permit it under the automatic route for coal and lignite mining for captive consumption by power projects, iron & steel, cement production and other eligible activities permitted as per the provisions of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973.